

Message Text

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1198

INFO AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

AMEMBASSY DUBLIN

AMEMBASSY LISBON

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY OTTAWA

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY ROME

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 USNATO 2041

LIMDIS

E.O. 11652: XGDS-1

TAGS: PFOR, NATO, PO

SUBJECT: REPORTS ON MEETINGS BETWEEN CANADIAN AMBASSADOR AND
PORTUGUESE OFFICIALS IN LISBON

REF: USNATO 1744

1. CANADIAN DELEGATION HAS CIRCULATED TO SYG LUNS AND OTHER
ALLIES (EXCEPT PORTUGAL) REPORTS OF MEETINGS BETWEEN CANADIAN
AMBASSADOR TO PORTUGAL AND PORTUGUESE OFFICIALS. A FIRST
MEETING (PARA 2) TOOK PLACE ON APRIL 1 WITH PORTUGUESE SECRETARY
OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS CAMPINOS, IN HIS CAPACITY AS ACTING
FOREIGN MINISTER. THE SECOND MEETING (PARA 3), ON APRIL 8, WAS
WITH FOREIGN MINISTER ANTUNES. IN BOTH THESE MEETINGS, THE
CANADIAN AMBASSADOR EXPRESSED THE VIEWS OF HIS GOVERNMENT PER
THE LETTER CIRCULATED ON MARCH 27 TO SYG LUNS AND SOME OF THE ALLIES
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(REFTEL).

2. BEGIN TEXT

THE CANADIAN AMBASSADOR BEGAN THE DISCUSSION BY EXPRESSING THE VIEWS OF THE CANADIAN GOVERNMENT AS ALREADY CONVEYED IN THE ATTACHMENT TO THE LETTER DATED MARCH 27 FROM THE CANADIAN DELEGATION.

IN REPLY MR. CAMPINOS STRESSED HIS SATISFACTION WITH THE CANADIAN INITIATIVE AND UNDERTOOK TO CONVEY OUR VIEWS TO THE PORTUGUESE FOREIGN MINISTER AS SOON AS HE RETURNED FROM HIS TRAVELS ABROAD.

CONCERNING PORTUGAL'S INTERNATIONAL COMMITMENTS, ESPECIALLY ITS PARTICIPATION IN NATO, THE ACTING FOREIGN MINISTER WAS CATEGORICAL: "PORTUGAL IS A PART OF EUROPE AND HAS NO INTENTION OF DOING ANYTHING THAT WOULD DISTURB THE BALANCE OF THAT CONTINENT, THAT IS TO SAY, OF THE WORLD". AT THE SAME TIME HE REALIZED THAT HIS COLLEAGUES TALKED OFTEN OF THE THIRD WORLD AND OF THE NECESSITY PROGRESSIVELY TO STRENGTHEN PORTUGAL'S TIES WITH IT, ALTHOUGH WITHOUT PREJUDICE TO TRADITIONAL ALLIANCES.

CONCERNING THE DOMESTIC POLITICAL SCENE, MR. CAMPINOS WAS OF THE OPINION THAT A BALANCE HAD BEEN MAINTAINED IN THE NEW CABINET AND HE WAS PLEASED THAT OTHER WESTERN COUNTRIES WERE FOLLOWING DEVELOPMENTS IN PORTUGAL WITH "PATIENCE" IN THE PERIOD LEADING UP TO THE ELECTIONS. IN HIS VIEW THESE WOULD BE THE DECISIVE TEST AND HE THOUGHT THAT THE NEW MINISTER OF THE INTERIOR WAS A LOYAL MAN WHO WOULD ENDEAVOR TO ENSURE DEMOCRATIC BALLOTING.

THE MOST IMPORTANT ASPECT OF THE ELECTIONS, ACCORDING TO THE ACTING FOREIGN MINISTER, WILL BE TO ESTABLISH THE LEGITIMACY AND REPRESENTATIVENESS OF PORTUGAL'S POLITICAL PARTIES. HE FORESAW THAT THE SOCIALISTS, POPULAR DEMOCRATS AND THE CDS WOULD AMONG THEMSELVES ACCOUNT FOR MORE THAN ONE-HALF OF THE VOTES CAST, WHILE THE COMMUNIST PARTY WOULD LIKELY OBTAIN 15 PERCENT. THIS IS WHY THE SOCIALISTS REMAINED IN THE COALITION IN ORDER TO MAINTAIN THEIR INFLUENCE. WHILE
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NO DOUBT SEVERAL POINTS OF VIEW MADE THEMSELVES FELT IN THE CABINET, " THE BATTLE HAD NOT BEEN LOST". AS PROOF OF THIS, SOARES HAD SUCCEEDED IN HAVING RETAINED IN THE HANDS OF THE SOCIALISTS VARIOUS IMPORTANT GOVERNMENT POSTS THAT THE COMMUNISTS WANTED TO HAVE THEM EXCLUDED FROM. IN A FEW WEEKS, IF THE SITUATION CONTINUED TO DETERIORATE, THE SOCIALISTS WOULD DECIDE WHETHER THEY WOULD HAVE TO "PASS TO THE OPPOSITION AND EVEN ENGAGE IN RESISTENCE". THE ACTING FOREIGN MINISTER ALSO REGRETTED THE CURRENT ANARCHY AND PRE-ELECTORAL INTERLUDE. FINALLY MR. CAMPINOS STATED THAT HIS PARTY OPPOSED THE BANNING WITHOUT DUE PROCESS OF THE THREE POLITICAL PARTIES BUT THIS DECISION HAD BEEN TAKEN BY THE COUNCIL OF THE REVOLUTION WITHOUT CONSULTATION

WITH MINISTERS. HE WAS ALSO DISTURBED AT THE NUMBER OF
ILLEGAL ARRESTS WHICH WERE NOT FOLLOWED BY CHARGES AND TRIAL.

COMMENT:

THE CANADIAN AMBASSADOR IN LISBON HAS CAUTIONED
THAT MR. CAMPINOS' VIEWS SHOULD PERHAPS BE SEEN MORE IN
LIGHT OF THE FACT THAT HE WAS ONE OF THE LEADERS OF A
MODERATE POLITICAL PARTY, RATHER THAN AS A SPOKESMAN FOR A
GOVERNMENT IN WHICH ARE REFLECTED SEVERAL TENDENCIES OR
CONFLICTING VIEWS. HOWEVER THE ACTING FOREIGN MINISTER WAS
CONVINCED THAT TIME WAS ON THE SIDE OF THE MODERATES AND
THE FOREIGN MINISTRY WAS FAR FROM BEING TAKEN OVER BY
MILITANT MARXISTS.

END TEXT.

3. BEGIN TEXT

THE CANADIAN AMBASSADOR BEGAN THE DISCUSSION
BY EXPRESSING THE VIEWS OF THE CANADIAN GOVERNMENT AS
CONVEYED IN THE ATTACHMENT TO THE LETTER DATED MARCH 27
FROM THE CANADIAN DELEGATION. THE ENSUING DISCUSSION THEN
CENTERED ON PORTUGAL'S INTERNATIONAL COMMITMENTS, THE
FORTHCOMING ELECTION AND THE ROLE OF THE ARMED FORCES
MOVEMENT, AND THE CURRENT ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL PROGRAMME.

INTERNATIONAL COMMITMENTS
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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 2 USNATO 2041

LIMDIS

THE MINISTER WAS CONVINCED OF THE NECESSITY FOR PORTUGAL TO MAINTAIN RELATIONS WITH NATO-"OUR PAST AND OUR INTERESTS LEAN ON US TOWARD THE WESTERN WORLD". HOWEVER PORTUGAL INTENDED TO OPEN OTHER AVENUES, NOTABLY TO MAINTAIN "PRIVILEGED RELATIONS WITH AFRICA, ESPECIALLY PORTUGUESE-SPEAKING AFRICA". THE CANADIAN AMBASSADOR THEN NOTED THAT THE PORTUGUESE PRESS SEEMED TO BE GIVING PUBLICITY ONLY TO THE COUNTRIES OF EASTERN EUROPE, TO WHICH THE PORTUGUESE FOREIGN MINISTER REPLIED THAT THE GOVERNMENT WAS VERY UNHAPPY WITH THESE NEWSPAPERS, TERMING THEM BOOKS OF COMMUNIST GROUPS THAT MISUNDERSTOOD THE TERM"LIBERTY".

THE FORTHCOMING ELECTIONS AND THE ROLE OF THE ARMED FORCES MOVEMENT

ACCORDING TO MR. ANTUNES THE MILITARY WAS PLAYING
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A PREPONDERANT ROLE AT PRESENT BECAUSE ONLY THE ARMY WAS CAPABLE OF AVOIDING A SITUATION OF ANARCHY. NO POLITICAL PARTY COULD ASSURE STABILITY, WHICH IN TURN REQUIRED THE TEMPORARY INSTITUTIONALIZATION OF THE ARMED FORCES MOVEMENT FOR A PERIOD OF THREE TO FIVE YEARS. THE MINISTER WAS CATEGORICAL IN DENYING THAT THE LATTER WAS TIED WITH THE COMMUNISTS SINCE IT DID NOT FAVOUR ANY POLITICAL PARTY BUT RATHER RECOGNIZED ALL DEMOCRATIC GROUPS, THAT IS TO SAY, "OF THE LEFT". FINALLY HE STATED "WE ARE NOT YET READY FOR DEMOCRACY OF THE BRITISH TYPE".

CURRENT SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC PROGRAMME

THE PORTUGUESE FOREIGN MINISTER APPEARED TO BE AMBARRASSED IN REACTION TO A QUESTION FROM THE CANADIAN AMBASSADOR ON THIS SUBJECT. DESPITE THE NATIONALIZATIONS THAT HAD TAKEN PLACE AFTER MARCH 11, THE MAIN LINES OF THE PROGRAMME WERE SAID NOT TO HAVE CHANGED, ESPECIALLY WITH REGARD TO FOREIGN INVESTMENT WHICH ANTUNES STATED, PORTUGAL NEEDED VERY MUCH. HE ALSO SAID A CODE REGULATING SUCH INVESTMENTS WILL PUBLISHED IN THE NEAR FUTURE IN ORDER TO REASSURE FOREIGN INDUSTRIAL AND INVESTMENT COMPANIES.

END TEXT.
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